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TO THE
K I N G S
MOST

Excellent Majesty:

AND TO THE
**LORDS Spiritual and Temporal; and the
COMMONS Assembled in Parliament.**

*The humble Petition of Thomas Violet of LONDON
Goldsmith.*

Humbly Sheweth,

I.  Hat great quantities of the currant English money of this Kingdom, hath been daily culled and melted down for the making Gold and Silver Wire, Thread, Lace, and Spangles, &c. to the great wast of the Stock of this Kingdom, and little or none, but light and clipped money left in the Nation.

II. That great quantities of Silver Wyre, Thread and Lace, hath been exposed to sale for good Silver, and upon the assay and tryal hath been found to be adulterate; by which evil practises many mischiefs and cheats have been put on the Nobility and Gentry, and all other Persons that wear gold and silver lace.

III. That great quantities of gold and silver lace, thread, and wyre is lightly and unduly made, and wrought, whereas the Workmen should put on six ounces silver, and two ounces silk, to make a pound Venice of silver thread; they many times work silver thread so light,

that five ounces silk, and three ounces silver make a pound *Venice*; and four ounces of heavy dyed silk, and four ounces of course silver make a pound *Venice*; so that the wearers are cozened many times, paying for course silver, and heavy dyed silk that is under the plate of silver thread, the price of fine silver. *Mr. Alexander Jackson* the sworn Assay-Master of Goldsmiths-Hall, hath made above one hundred Assays of several parcels of course and adulterate gold and silver wyre, thread, lace, spangles, all sould for good silver to the buyers.

IV. Whereas there is an endeavour by some persons, to get the Wire drawers of *London* a Corporation, and a draught of a Corporation drawn, as your Petitioner is informed; should this project take, this design was to suffer the gold Wire drawers to work iniquity by a Law, and to cozen the Nobility, Gentry, and Commonalty by Authority, as the Silkmen did when they had a Corporation to Regulate heavy died silk about 1634.

It was proved, the principal in the Corporation, that was trusted to regulate the dying silk, was the principal offenders, that cozened the Kingdom by heavy died silk, and for that reason the Patent was damned. The like abuse was proved in Parliament against these Wire drawers and Refiners Predecessors, about the Year 1619. yet now the gold Wire drawers and Refiners look for a Corporation. It was proved in Parliament, these men, contrary to their trust, made silver lace with a core of Copper, and daily sould it for good and fine silver to the buyers and wearers. *Sir Giles Monperson*, and *Sir ——— Michael, Kts.* were both fined, and degraded by the Parliament, for procuring the gold Wire drawers, from King *JAMES*, to have a Corporation; and for acting and practising with the gold Wire drawers to cozen the Kingdom, the Patent was damned in a quiet Parliament, your Petitioner humbly refers to the Records of Parliament, touching this business, about 1619.

V. His late Majesty of blessed Memory, after many daies hearing at the Council Table, and upon complaint to Him, and His Privy Council, by the Wardens and some of the Company of Goldsmiths, your Petitioner and some others, was commanded by the Privy Council to make a search, and we did discover in several Shops in *London*, one hundred and odde several parcels of course and adulterate wire, thread, lace, and spangles, exposed and vended for good silver.

VI. Whereupon his late Majesty of blessed Memory, did by His Proclamation and Commission in the 11. Year of His Reign, settle this Manufacture of gold and silver wire, and lace, &c. and restrained all abuses, and by the care of His Privy Council, and some eminent Gentlemen, being appointed Commissioners for that business, and the King would not trust the Wire drawers or Refiners with a Corporation; the

the Commissioners did from 1635. till these troubles 1642. cause all abuses to be stopped, and made this Manufacture of good silver, and paid the King in lew of his Customs above four thousand pounds a year; for all this time your Petitioner was appointed by Patent under the Great Seal of England, to see to the due Regulation of all these Manufactures, and by his vigilance prevented all former abuses.

And your Petitioner did warrant, and put in security into the Exchequer, that all gold and silver wire drawn at the Office for making of any gold or silver lace, thread, cloth of gold or silver, or imbroide-ry, was all good fine silver, according to the Standard appointed, or else to pay the full damage to the party grieved. This Regulation continued till the coming in of the Scots, the obstruction of the Law, the death of the Earl of Strafford.

And shortly after, His Majesty being forced by Tumults from London, the Commissioners appointed to Regulate this business, attending His Majesty, went from London also, and ever since the Kingdom hath been cozened by the workers of gold and silver lace, &c. as your Petitioner can demonstrate at large, and is certified by a Committee of the pretended Parliament 1657.

Your Petitioner's humble prayer is to your Majesty, that his Patent which he hath granted to him under the Great Seal of England for two lives, may be confirmed on him; that your Majesty and the Parliament settle such Orders and Rules, that this Manufacture of gold and silver lace, and thread, &c. may be all warranted to the Kingdom. Your Petitioner hath already put in security in the Exchequer, to warrant the same to all Persons, and that especial care be taken, that the gold Wire drawers never be trusted to manage this Regulation: But your Petitioner being the publick Officer, and he is no Trader in this Manufacture, have the trust of managing and assaying of this Manufacture: And that you would be pleased to lay such an Excise on the silver wire employed in this Manufacture, as may in some proportion satisfy His Majesty for that he loseth in His Customes, by suffering this Manufacture to be made in England, there being now no Excise laid on this Manufacture, which may bear an Excise better then many other commodities taxed; the Book of Rates in the Custom-house will inform you in this particuler, for an Excise to be in some proportion to that.

Your Petitioner prostrates himself at Your Sacred feet, beseeching Your Majesty, and this High Court of Parliament, to take notice that your Petitioner hath suffered above twenty thousand pound damages; by serving Your Royal Father of blessed Memory, and for beeing His late Majesties gracious Letter to London, 1643. To the Lord Mayor, and Aldermen of London, for doing thereof, I suffered

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imprisonment in the *Tower* four years, and before, and since, was committed on Ship-board, in *Peter-house*, *Kings-bench*, and Serjeant at *Armes* custody, in all, in several Prisons, about eight years, for his loyalty to your Majesties Royal Father of blessed Memory. In tender consideration whereof, your Petitioner humbly desires his Patent for two lives for the surveying, sealing, and assaying this Manufacture, may be granted to your Petitioner for one and thirty years, with all fees, and power, formerly granted to your Petitioner by your Royal Father of blessed Memory, under the Great Seal of *England*, and the same to be confirmed by your Majesty, and this High Court of Parliament, to your Petitioner and his Assigns, in consideration of your Petitioners great losses, as aforesaid.

(And your Petitioner, as in duty bound, shall ever pray, &c.)

THOMAS VIOLET.

*An Advertisement from the working Cutlers,
within this City of London, and Suburbs thereof.*

IN regard that we have already made some progress, in detecting the unjust and fraudulent practises of the Casters of Silver Hilts, in and about *London*; We, whose names are subscribed, do hereby also, out of an humble and due respect to all Personages of honour, and in order to the publick good, give notice; That upon the first of *November* instant, search being made by the Masters, Wardens, and Assistants of the right Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths *London*, there were by them found in the hands and custodie of the Shop-keepers of the Cutlery, many supposed Hilts of Silver, which they accordingly seized on: And after Tryal made at the Test of their Hall, finding them to consist of an adulterated and mixt Mettal, and to want much of Sterling in every ounce; they

they the said Masters, Wardens, and Assistants, did immediately send summons to the Shop-keepers aforesaid, to appear before them on Friday the eighth of this moneth, at Goldsmiths Hall; enjoying them likewise to bring with them the Silver-smiths, who were the Casters of the Hilts before-specified: Who then and there appearing, the Silver-smiths had all their Hilts broken before their faces, and were every man of them (for their unconscionable dealings) fined. Not to mention, that one of these Hilts thus seized on and tested, was known to want no less then ten Shillings in the pound; and how that this casting of Silver Hilts (especially of a corrupt mixture) was never much heard of, till *Olivers* days: it being an Invention crept up in those tyrannical and Lawless times, wherein every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

Thomas Waddington.

Thomas Ward.

Thomas Edward.

John Outlaw.

Henry Pantow.

Edward Woodward.

John Stanton.

Thomas Sweetman.

John Bibb.

Thomas Fuller.

Richard Stanford.

John Hawgood.

George Lovell.

John Hinton.

Robert Martin.

Thomas Price.

John Carter.

Daniel Wilson.

If all Tradesmen were so honest as these good men the Cutlers of London, all Manufactures would be justly and truly made, all cofenage discovered and detected, to the honour of all Tradesmen, and the benefit of the Wearers, Men and Women would not daily be cheated in Gold and Silver Lace, were the Wire drawers as honest as the Cutlers.

MAY it please your Majesty, and the high Court of Parliament, This day meeting with the above-said advertisement from these honest Tradesmen the Cutlers of London; I thought it my Duty humbly to Represent the same to you: That so you may see out of Their own mouths of these honest men that desire a Reformation, what abuses they confesse hath crept into their Trade since the late lawlesse Times, wherein every man did what was right in his own eyes, and have Cofened the Kingdom, especially persons of honour and quality, the like and greater abuses hath and is dayly practised by the Refiners of gold and silver, the gold wyerdrawers, and silk men, dayly put on all the wearers of gold and silver lace within this twenty years many score thousand of pounds, and yet none of them complain or desire of a Redress Petitioned for, or presented by any publick advertisement from the gold wyerdrawers, or silkmen, Refiners of gold or silver, or any of them, of the dayly abuses and cheats put upon the Nobility and Gentry that wears gold and silver lace, either by the heavy died silk, or course silver made into all these Manufactures, it is for their profit to have these cheats put upon the wearers, and therefore they will not complain of them.

But instead thereof an earnest endeavour of the Wyerdrawers and Refiners to have a Corporation, and themselves to be the Judges of that Regulation.

gulation, the design is, to cosen the Kingdom by Authority of a Corporation, as they did in 1619. see the Records in Parliament, and 1634. in the silk Corporation, where the principle of the Corporation being great silkmen, were the principle offenders that cheated the Kingdom, and were sentenced in the Star-chamber, and their Corporation made void; *When the Constable is the thief the Flew and cry wi l never be served*, the certificate of the Committee for Trade sets forth the great mischief a Corporation to the gold wyer drawers would do the Kingdom, to which Certificate I humbly refer.

I have attended the Wardens, and Company of Goldsmiths, and their Court of Assistants, and complained to them of these abuses dayly practised by Refiners of silver, gold wyer drawers, and silkmen, and they have all of them acknowledged it to be true, and they have given me thanks at several Courts of assistants in their Hall for my Information, and have desired me to present the same to your Majesty, and your Privy Council.

And have promised me upon Order of this Parliament to them and me, that they and your Petitioner, would set down ways for the Regulation and preventing these abuses for the future. This they know I can do, by reason of my former employment six years for the due Regulation of these Manufactures, I caused these Manufactures to be made as exactly as the plate or money of the Kingdom.

The Company of Goldsmiths are trusted by all of Parliament with the touch and assay of all the Plate of the Kingdom, and have worthily and justly discovered this great trust for many score years they having great lands tyed for this Performance, and so upon the expectation of your Petitioners Grants, they are very fit persons for to be trusted to Regulate these Manufactures upon security given by them.

I knowing many of the workers, and the blind places and corners, (till these late troubles that destroyed all Government and Order) in and about London, where these Manufactures are adulteratly wrought, and so from time to time your Petitioner will discover and prevent them, I knowing the makers and venders of bad silver for these works.

The Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths, the Wardens and Assistants, have desired me to present these same abuses to the High Court of Parliament, that so upon an Examination before a Committee, the powers that I have under the Great Seal of England, for searching in all places, to seize and deface all adulterate gold and silver lace, wire, thread, spangles, may be confirmed by Parliament, and the Wardens, and Assistants of the Company of Goldsmiths and your Petitioner, who are no Traders in gold and silver lace, thread, or wire, though they be Artists, to joyn and assist me from time to time, as I find out these Offences and Offenders, and bring them to punishment, and as I find out the blind places and workers, and venders of this adulterate course silver Manufactures, to bring the same to Goldsmiths-hall, and to deface their work, being found upon assay to be course and adulterate, and under sterling, or not duly wrought with a due proportion of silver to silk.

This Order and Regulation will prevent the culling and melting down the heavy currant silver Coynes of the Kingdom, and prevent all former abuses,

abuses, the Company of Goldsmiths daily assisting, advising, and countenancing your Petitioner to discharge the Trust and Dutie of his place according to the powers already granted to your Petitioner under the Great Seal of England, that so all former abuses may be prevented, and the credit of this Manufacture restored to be made and warranted to all the wearers to be as good silver as the Plate or money of the Kingdom.

And for the due encouragement of the Company of Goldsmiths to joyn with your Petitioner to look carefully after this Regulation for the future, that after your Petitioners Grant under the Great Seal be expired, that then by Authority of this Supreme Court, the Powers, Fees, and Sallaries, be for ever hereafter annexed and granted to the Company of Goldsmiths to inable them to do this service, and to inable them to warrant all gold and silver wyer drawn by them at such place or places as shall be agreed on for the making all the aforesaid Manufactures to be good silver, not under sterling.

They putting in such security to the King as shall be by Him thought good: to warrant all gold and silver wyer by them drawn for any these Manufactures to be good silver.

This course will perfect the Reformation, and prevent the daily abuses put on all the wearers of gold and silver lace when this Regulation is confirmed and settled by Authority of Parliament; And when your Petitioner being joyned with the Company of Goldsmiths that are Artists, but no Traders in this Manufacture, shall be bound to warrant the same to all the wearers, and your Petitioner and the Company of Goldsmiths be the overseers to look to the wyerdrawing, silkmen, and other Traders in this Commodity shall do their duties according to the Law.

Your Petitioner humbly prays your Majesty and this Supreme Court to appoint a Committee to examine these particulars, and in regard of your Petitioners great losses and sufferings for your Majesties Royal Father of blessed memory, and also in regard of your Petitioners experience and ability to prevent, find out, and discover, the dark and hidden ways, corners and secrets of the workmen that adulterately work this Manufacture contrary to the Law; and for that your Petitioner hath never been nor will be a Trader in any of the aforesaid Commodities, whereby he might be induced for his private gain to be corrupted. In regard of all the premises your Petitioner may have his Patent confirm'd on him for one and thirty years by Act of Parliament, with such Powers, Fees, and Sallaries, as your Petitioner hath already granted to him for two lives under the Great Seal of England.

And during the continuance of your Petitioners Grant, I am willing to allow the Company of Goldsmiths for their care and assistance in Regulating this business one third part of the clear profit which I make during my time of my Patent, and this I humbly offer, because I would have the Kingdom justly served in all parts, with this Manufacture, which if well Regulated would be most profitable and advantageous to commerce and trade,

And your Petitioner shall ever Pray, &c.

THOMAS VIOLET.

May

THOMAS VIOLET

May it please your Majesty, your Royal Father taking notice of the great quantities of English gold transported by Merchants and others, in the 12 year of His Reign, by the advice of His Council, commanded me *Thomas Violet* to find out and discover the Offenders; And I did not deceive the Kings expectation, for these fourteen men hereafter named, were sentenced for transporting gold at my prosecution and discovery, 13 Car. in the Star-Chamber, in which prosecution I spent 1960 l. and His Majesty in regard of this service and expence, gave me the Office for surveying, sealing, assaying, and regulating gold and silver wire, thread, and lace, His Majesty well knowing I understood this mystery, to prevent the frauds of the gold wiredrawers, and would faithfully do it.

<i>Charles Frank</i> 4000 ^l	}	<i>Rich. Cockrem</i> 1000 ^l	}	<i>Isaac Brames</i> 1000 l.
<i>Robert Ellis</i> 4000 ^l		<i>John Parrat</i> 1000 ^l		<i>Henry Futter</i> 500 l.
<i>Isaac Romiere</i> 3000 ^l		<i>Peter Hern</i> 1000 ^l		<i>Henry Sweeting</i> 500 l.
<i>Jacob Dilew</i> 1000 ^l		<i>John Terry</i> 2000 ^l		<i>John Perrin</i> 100 l.
<i>Roger Fletcher</i> 1000 ^l		<i>Timothy Eman</i> 2000 ^l		

The total of the said Fines amount to the summe of 24100 l.

Your Majesty hath lately set out several Proclamations against transporting gold and silver without licence, and giving for gold above 21s. 4d. yet some persons every day break Your Proclamations, and give for gold 21 s. 8d. 21s. 10d. and transporting gold and silver out of the Kingdom without licence, to the destruction of the Mint. I have lately humbly petitioned your Majesty, offering to discover the Offenders, stop the transporting gold and silver without your Majesties licence. This Petition your Majesty hath graciously referred to Your Officers of the Mint, and they all of them knowing what I have done formerly, have certified the Right Honourable the Lord Treasurer, that it is for your Majesties service for to imploy your Petitioner, and grant him the Fees humbly desired, to support his charge in prosecution and intelligence, and for his pains, and it is a sure way to hinder this mischief, and keep the Mint on work. If your Majesty make one hundred Proclamations, and appoint no particular person to make it his business to see that Your Law be not broken concerning this matter, this mischief will not be prevented; for every mans business is no mans business, and this cannot be done but at great charge, few people know the way, or can imagine and find out the dark designs and contrivances of transporting gold and silver.

And if your Majesty will have the transporters of money discovered, I humbly offer to do it, so I be payed for my charge, as the Officers of the Mint have certified, all which I humbly submit at your Majesties, and this High Court of Parliaments feet. When your Majestie hath a desire to hinder the Transporting of Gold or Silver without Licence, then to employ your humble Petitioner, who will on his life do it, so your Majesty give but order to the Barons of the Exchequer, to see Your Laws observed.

THOMAS VIOLET.

